

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, and 7-9 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found, *inter alia*, on page 11, paragraph 34 of the present application.

Claims 1-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by WO99/49792 to Törmälä (Törmälä '792). Claims 7, 9, and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,843,084 to Hart *et al* ("Hart"). Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by 99/0171 to Törmälä (Törmälä '171).

Applicants submit that the present claims recite a fastener having a proximal portion that has a tapered, curved end that terminates in a sharp tip. None of the references cited against any of the pending claims teach or suggest this element. Specifically, Törmälä '792 describes a fastener with a proximal portion that has a blunt end, not a sharp tip. Similarly, Hart describe a fastener having a proximal portion that is rounded, not sharp. With respect to Törmälä '171, this reference describes a fastener that has a proximal portion having protrusions and a blunt end. Although the protrusions can be sharp as illustrated in Figure 2, Törmälä '171 teaches the end of the proximal portion being blunt, instead of terminating in a sharp tip, as recited by the present claims. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the present claims are not anticipated by any of the cited references and request withdrawal of these rejections.


CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative to discuss any issue that would expedite allowance of the subject application.

It is not believed that any extensions of time or other fees are required in connection with the filing of this response. However, if any fees for extension(s) of time or additional fees are required in connection with the filing of this response, such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any such required fees or to credit any overpayment to Kenyon & Kenyon's Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,
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